SHL
WITHDRAWN
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
LONDON

-2. APR. 1958

BULLETIN

OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARIES

No. 5.

MARCH 1958.

THE LIBRARY OF SION COLLEGE

Like so many similar English institutions Sion College owed its conception and establishment to the vision and generosity of one man, in this case Dr. Thomas White, who was Rector of St. Dunstan-in-the-West until his death in 1624. By the agency of three prudent marriages Thomas White was a wealthy man, but childless, and at a time when strife in the English Church was pervasive and bitter he left a large part of his fortune to found an establishment where brotherly love could be promoted and maintained among the clergy of at least the City of London.

A few years after the death of Thomas White one of his kinsmen and executors, the Revd. John Simson, provided or collected enough money to build a library room on the first floor of the College and to make an endowment of £16 per annum. In the early days the library itself was formed entirely of gifts and bequests, some in money and some in kind. The troubled years of the Commonwealth brought difficulties to the College, and the Restoration was quickly followed by the Great Fire, in which - due, one feels, partly to inefficient organisation - a third of the Library perished. The remainder, removed to safety at the Charterhouse, was eventually brought back to the College's new premises in 1670.

It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the Fire and the appeal which was made because of it resulted in a number of exceptionally fine benefactions. Among these may be mentioned the magnificent library of some 600 volumes collected by Sir Robert Coke and bequeathed to the College in 1698 by George Earl of Berkeley (a collection which contained inter alia no less than 3 of the College's 5 Caxtons); 1,100 volumes bequeathed by Dr. John Lawson, President of the Royal College of Physicians; nearly 2,000 books bequeathed by the Revd. Edward Waple, a Past President of the College; and some 3,000 given by Mrs. Thomas James, widow of a London printer who was the grandson of Bodley's first librarian. Later the splendid collection of nearly 400 volumes of pamphlets covering the late 17th and early 18th centuries formed by Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London (d.1748) came into the College's possession.

The copyright Act of 1710 was a milestone in the life of the College, for Sion, owing to the generosity with which it made its services available to all scholars, whether clerical or lay, became one of the favoured libraries; though the

privilege was a mixed blessing in the early days, as books copyrighted tended to be of the cheaper type and they were, in any case, usually supplied in sheets. Copyright was withdrawn from Sion College by the Copyright Act of 1836 and commuted to an annual sum which the College still receives, and at the time of this Act there were many who considered the change an advantage to the College as it meant that the purchase of books published abroad became possible.

A word now about the scope and contents of the Library. Its size is considerable, though somewhat exaggerated figures have been published from time to time. My estimate is about 100,000 volumes. About half of the Library consists of theological and religious books, the other half consists of a good selection of the humanities, history being particularly well represented; though with the increase in the price of books and also the improvement in Public Library services the College is tending to concentrate more and more on the theological and similar works which are not so likely to be found in general libraries.

It is impossible in this short description to do justice to the size and range of the College's collection of early theological works. Although until the passing of the 1710 Copyright Act Sion depended to a very large extent on gifts there are surprisingly few gaps; and there are on the shelves a great many foreign publications which one could certainly not depend upon finding in an English library. Books of the S.T.C. and Wing periods are more than plentiful, and our list of 'not in Wing' books is growing!

To pick out special books for mention is difficult because of the embarras de richesse. There are several important and beautiful mediaeval MSS; a fine folio Psalter (c. 1270) once owned by Simon de Meopham Archbishop of Canterbury; a 13th century York Breviary which was for some time believed to be the only one in existence; an exquisite French Book of Hours; and an early 14th century Wyclif Old Testament. Important documentary MSS. include Dr. Thomas Bray's papers on the formation of the Maryland bishopric, bequeathed to the Library in 1730, and the Records of the London Provincial Assembly (1647-60).

Among the printed books may be mentioned a fine collection of Bibles which includes the four early polyglots (the 'Complutensian' 1514-17, the 'Antwerp' printed by Plantin

1569-1572, the 'Lejay' 1645, and the 'Walton' 1657; the first Bible printed in English, Coverdale's Zürich edition of 1535; Tyndale's Pentateuch 1530; the Aldine Greek Bible of 1518; and all the principal English editions.

Pride of place among many literary first editions goes to Shakespeare's Lucrece 1594. Others include Gulliver's Travels, Herrick's Hesperides, Paradise Regained, many works of Pope and Dryden, and a great number of lesser known rare or unique items.

Most important of all, from a bibliographical point of view, are the incunables, which have only recently been collected together as such; there are nearly 80 of them. At the top of the list come the 5 Caxtons; the possession of a copy of The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye, c. 1475, given to the College in 1646 by Matthew Forster, is a cause of great pride to Sion. Other important 15th century works include; Ludovicus Pontanus de Roma's Singularia, printed at Utrecht in about 1470 by the mysterious 'Printer of the Speculum'; Hypnerotomachia Poliphili printed by Aldus Manutius of Venice in 1499; Wynkyn de Worde's Chastysing of Goddes Children printed from Caxton's types in about 1494; a copy of the first book printed in London, John Lettou's edition of Antonius Andreae's Quaestiones super XII Libros Metaphysicae Aristotelis 1480; a very fine edition of Voragine's Legenda Aurea printed by Parix of Toulouse in about 1480, of which no other copy is known in England or America; Turrecremata's Expositio super Psalterio printed by Paulus Hurus of Saragossa in 1484; and 4 or 5 other books of which the only recorded British copy is in Sion College.

However, the Library is more than a museum (although it is sometimes tempting to gloat over one's treasures), and members of our Association will naturally wish to know Sion's position in the library world to-day. It must be emphasised here that the library is still a 'public' library in the sense that its resources are available to all bona fide students and scholars. The permission of the President and Court of Governors is required, but this is never unreasonably withheld. Borrowing books, as opposed to consultation on the premises, is restricted to members, but membership is open to all Anglican clergy in Great Britain; and in special cases clergy of other denominations and laymen (and laywomen!) may, by paying a subscription, obtain full use of the Library. Subscriptions are one guinea for assistant clergy, one-and-a-half guineas for all others. Books may be posted to

members, and the periods allowed for reading are generous

With the aid of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust we are proceeding with the checking and cataloguing of the Library. There is in existence a dictionary card catalogue, but not more than two-thirds of the books are included in it. The remainder have to be searched for on one of the old folio catalogues. It is, of course, our aim to provide an adequate entry in the card catalogue for every book and pamphlet in the Library, but this enormous task can proceed only slowly.

The classification scheme in the Library is a rather curios adaptation of Dewey, drawn up by a theologian who evidently had no conception of the pitfalls which lie in wait for the amateur classifier. However, inadequate as it is, we have no intention of changing it. Remembering the figures which were given above for the number of volumes in the Library members will not, I am sure, ask the reason why!

The Library's greatest problem is bookbinding. After severe war damage, and also the mere passage of time, the covers of many of our books are crumbling to pieces. A recent appeal has brought in enough to repair most of our particular treasures, but needless to say a very large sum is required to do the job properly, and the Governors of the College are doing what they can to secure the necessary funds.

Elizabeth Edmondston.

A History of C.M.S. Ladies' College, Colombo, 1900-1955

Obtainable from the Church Missionary Society, price 6s. (net), by post 6s.6d. This book claims to be more than a history of Ladies' College, Colombo; it is also a social history, for it deals with the changing conditions of girls in Ceylon through the development of secondary education.

The World Congress of Faiths has issued a Library catalogue, no. 1,November 1957, obtainable from Younghusband House, 23,Norfolk Sq.,London,W.2. The catalogue represents the contents of the library in the Spring of 1957, and a supplement will be issued later containing subsequent additions. It is intended to list, from time to time, further editions to the library in the journal Forum.

The Scottish Scene. 1.

Scotland has for long had a reputation for being theology-conscious and perhaps only a little less philosophy-conscious. It is certainly the case that this country has been and is very well supplied with books in these two fields, and it is the purpose of these articles to provide some idea of the resources of Scottish libraries in these subjects. The main interest will be in special libraries, but it should be noted that many of the Public Libraries make room for books in these subjects, and in certain cases an increasing proportion of shelf-space. There seem to be no libraries specifically devoted to philosophy, but there are many whose chief end is to supply students and readers in theology, and these are mostly connected with various denominations of the Church. Most if not all of them have sections devoted to philosophy. This first article deals with the libraries connected with the Church of Scotland.

First there is the Library of the General Assembly of the Church, which up to the present has been housed within the Tolbooth-St. John's Church at the head of the Lawnmarket in Edinburgh. The future of this Library is at present under consideration.

On the one hand it houses the Records of the Church, including Registers, Minute-books, Roll-books, etc., belonging to the courts of the Church - Assembly, Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions. The Assembly has ordered that all books containing Records prior to 1800 should be lodged here, but there are still many which are kept locally by the Clerks of the Courts concerned. In addition to Records prior to 1800, many of the records of congregations which have been dissolved, or have united with other congregations, have been placed here for safe custody, and in consequence there are Records not only of the Church of Scotland, but also of some of its constituent parts, e.g., of the Free Church between 1843 and 1900, of the United Presbyterian Church prior to 1900, and of the United Presbyterian Church prior to 1900, and of the United Free Church between 1900 and 1929. These volumes, it will be obvious, contain a vast amount of historical source-material, and can be consulted by arrangement with the Librarian.

On the other hand, the Library contains some 10,000 printed books. There is an almost complete collection of Acts and Records of the General Assembly, of Acts of Parliament, Statutes, and other official publications. The Librarian over many years has made a very excellent collection of histories of individual parishes and congregations of the Church in Scotland, and this is constantly being added to. The general history of the Church

is given special attention. There is a valuable collection of publications of the 16th and 17th centuries, especially controversial works. This Library used to have a large amount of general theology, but the bulk of that material has been transferred to New College Library. The emphasis is thus on the history of the Church in Scotland.

Three other Libraries exist in connection with the Church of Scotland, those of New College, Edinburgh, of Trinity College, Glasgow, and of Christ's College, Aberdeen. A brief historical notice regarding these will be useful. In 1843 the Disruption took place when the Free Church of Scotland was formed by a split from the Church of Scotland. It was immediately necessary not only to provide churches and manses for those who adhered to the Free Church, but also training for future ministers. Hence three colleges were established, in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. In 1900 the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church united to form the United Free Church, and the three colleges were then the training ground for ministers of that Church. In 1929 the United Free Church united with the Church of Scotland under the latter name, and a few years later the Divinity Faculty of each of the three Universities united with the corresponding College. Hence at present each College houses the teaching and other activities of the united Faculty, and each College contains the main theological library of the University, though in each case there are sections on philosophical, literary and other general subjects, while each University also contains a section on theology.

Consider first New College Library. [Fuller details can be found in New College Edinburgh. A Centenary History, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1946.] The College was opened in 1846, and at once many volumes were presented by members of all social classes and of all denominations. One Anglican presented his own library, and in 39 successive donations gave over 3,000 volumes. Indeed within nine months of its inception, the Library housed some 9,000 books, and ever since additions have constantly been made, partly by gift, but also by purchase, and at the present time there are over 150,000 volumes plus over 30,000 pamphlets and files of periodicals. All this created a serious problem, for the library was housed in various parts of the College and much was not readily accessible. However in 1935 the High Church which was within the original plan of the College buildings, was transported to a new church (Reid Memorial) in Blackford, and the church building was taken over by the

College authorities and at a cost of over £23,000 was fitted for its new purpose. There is now a fine Library Hall, beneath which on three floors the collections are housed.

As to the contents of the Library, only a few notes can be made. There are some medieval manuscripts of works by St. Augustine, Athanasius, Bonaventura and others, and there are large collections of MS sermons and other writings by Covenanting and Secession ministers and others, and the extant papers of Thomas Chalmers, including his diaries, lectures, journals, and many hundreds of letters received by him. There is a large collection of autographs, letters and other documents of famous men and women. Very valuable is the collection of Persian, Arabic and Urdu MSS, a printed catalogue of which was made by Dr. R.B. Serjeant. There are also several Chinese MSS. and books. There are about 100 Incunabula, most of which have a theological interest, and a catalogue of these has appeared in the publications of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society. There are many printed books of the 16th century, especially in theology and history, and incidentally there is a fine collection of rare scientific works of the 16th and 17th centuries.

A few special collections may be noted. There is the Hymnological Collection of over 3,000 volumes, which is based on the collection made last century by the Edinburgh Bookseller, James Thin, augmented by other smaller collections. Many useful books on the theory and practice of music, and especially of church music, have been and are being added. From the General Assembly's Library came a large number of theological and liturgical works. To the latter group many interesting volumes have been added recently, including a Vintimille Paris Breviary of 1778, inscribed as the gift of R.F. Littledale to J.M. Neale in 1860. There is a very valuable collection of Oriental books from the libraries of Hugh Binning and Ion Keith-Falconer. The Gaelic collection contains many intersting books, and was recently greatly strengthened by the bequest of the Rev. Roderick McLeod, who had many Irish Gaelic books. The Jackson collection of books on Old Testament subjects may also be mentioned, while about half of the Library of Adam Smith, author of The Wealth of Nations, is also housed here.

In the pamphlet section, some of the most interesting and valuable are those written by Luther and other early German theologians; but the largest group covers the controversies of the 17th and 18th centuries, a field much examined by research students. As might be expected, the Library contains a large number of Bibles, polyglots, Greek, Latin and English as well as many foreign tongues.

The second Library to be mentioned is that of Trinity College, Glasgow, whose relation to the University of Glasgow has been similar to that of New College to the University of Edinburgh. This College was opened on 18th August 1856, and the next day an advertisement appeared in the Scottish Guardian, asking for contributions to the Library, whether of books or of money. By 1874 the Library contained some 9,000 volumes, and in that year Principal Patrick Fairbairn's personal library of 4,000 books was added. He was responsible for the acquisition of many valuable works, including many incunabula. An important section here is the Tischendorf Library of between 2,500 and 3,000 volumes made by this famous biblical scholar. This has special reference to biblical subjects, and includes a complete collection of the works of Tischendorf of over 100 volumes, many versions of Greek and Latin New Testaments, and so on. Another collection is that of over 500 Celtic books, bought and presented to the College at the instance of the Rev. William Ross who gathered the necessary £175. There is the Mearns Hymnological Collection of about 3,000 volumes, which was added in 1923. This Mearns was the assistant editor of Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, and the collection contains four draft volumes of the Dictionary with notes by Julian and Mearns for the revised edition of 1907. The Eadie Library of over 8,000 books came from the Library of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in 1902, and the library of the Divinity Hall of the University was transferred here some years after the Union of 1929. A large collection of books and manuscript records and other writings from the Library of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church was added about the same time. Altogether this Library has between 80,000 and 100,000 volumes with in addition some 14,000 pamphlets and tracts.

Thirdly there is the Library of Christ's College, Aberdeen. This is the smallest of the three Colleges and has the smallest library, but it contains some very important and valuable works. Among its 40,000 volumes is the Banchory Collection, which was bequeathed along with a sum of money by Mr. Alexander Thomson of Banchory, a general collection rich in Italian literature and in works on the history and archaeology of Scotland. There is also the Library of Dr. Biesenthal of Leipzig, purchased in 1873 by a special effort, this forming probably the largest collection of Rabbinical and Jewish learning in Scotland, and containing many rare and valuable editions. The third important collection here is the Brown-Lindsay Library, mostly of theology, which came from the United Presbyterian College Library after the Union of 1900. General works on theology and other subjects are added from time to time in this useful collection.

John A. Lamb, Ph.D.,D.D.

Editorial Notes

It was not necessary to hold an election for the 1958 Committee owing to the fact that the number of nominations did not equal the number of vacancies. The following were nominated and were therefore automatically elected:-
Chairman: Rev.F. Courtney, S.J., Heythrop College.
Deputy Chairman: Mr.R.L.Collison, Westminster Reference Library.
Hon.Secretary/Treasurer: Miss J.Ferrier, C.M.S.Library,
Father Philip Caraman (Farm Street Library), Mr. R.J.Hoy (School of Oriental and African Studies Library - Hon. Editor of Bulletin), Rev. Dr.J.A.Lamb (New College, Edinburgh), Rev. R.Thomas (Dr. Williams's Library) The three remaining places will be filled by co-option.

The A.G.M. has been tentatively fixed for September in Edinburgh; Miss Ferrier is at present in correspondence with Dr. Lamb to deal with such details as accommodation, cost, etc.

In response to an enquiry about advertising in this Bulletin the Committee have decided to allow advertising material to be distributed with the Bulletin, provided that the advertiser pays the cost of postage. Material from only one advertiser will be permitted with each issue.

A letter has been received from Mr. P.H.Sewell, Head of the Department of Librarianship of the North-Western Polytechnic, Prince of Wales Rd., London, N.W.5., relating to the Final Examination of the Library Association, Part III(b) - Literature and Librarianship of Philosophy and Religion. The number of candidates taking this paper is inevitably small, and so lectures in preparation for the paper are held only at intervals. Mr. Sewell points out that the last series of lectures within this field held at the N.W.P. was in 1955, and he is therefore willing to provide a second series in the Autumn of 1958 provided that he is reasonably sure of a fair attendance.

The lectures are not aimed solely at the examination, and attendance at them is not limited to exam. students. There is no doubt that anyone working in these fields (which ipso facto means all members of ABTAPL) would benefit by attending the lectures.

Will anyone interested in the project please get directly into touch with Mr. Sewell at the address given above. It would be helpful if members would disseminate information about these lectures as widely as possible.